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Chairman: Ms. Intelmann ..... (Estonia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 51: Macroeconomic policy questions (*continued*)

(a) International trade and development (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.14)

Draft resolution on international trade and development

1. **Mr. Le Roux** (South Africa) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.14 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The aim was to send a strong political message to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the need to resume trade negotiations and conclude the Doha Round with the fullest development dimension. Given that the draft resolution contained no specific details regarding those negotiations, he hoped that a consensus would soon be reached.

Agenda item 53: Sustainable development (*continued*)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.16 and 21)

Draft resolution on the International Year of Sanitation

2. **Mr. Kodera** (Japan) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.16, which Monaco had joined in sponsoring. The lack of tangible progress on sanitation was a major stumbling block not only to sustainable development but also to health, poverty reduction, education and gender equality. More concerted global action was urgently needed in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and fulfil the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. To that end, the United Nations Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation had put forward concrete policy recommendations in the Hashimoto Action Plan released earlier that year. One such recommendation concerned the International Year of Sanitation, which sought to raise awareness in order to mobilize the resources needed to make progress in that area.

Draft resolution on the International Year of Forests, 2011

3. **Ms. Zubčević** (Croatia), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.21, said that forests were crucial for eradicating poverty, reducing land and resource degradation, improving food security and ensuring access to safe drinking water and affordable energy. Models had been developed for obtaining economic benefits from forests, while preserving the environment and biodiversity. The sustainable management of forest ecosystems was therefore extremely important. The initiative to declare 2011 the International Year of Forests should be seen as part of efforts to achieve the goals and targets set at global conferences and to implement the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences. It was an additional effort to ensure forest sustainability and review the results achieved since Rio and Johannesburg and should be an opportunity to further strengthen multi-stakeholder dialogue, policy and programme coordination, and public participation.

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.18)

Draft resolution on follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

4. **Ms. Zia** (South Africa) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.18 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its ninth special session (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.19)

Draft resolution on the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its ninth special session

5. **Ms. Zia** (South Africa) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.19 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Agenda item 54: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.17)

Draft resolution on implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

6. **Ms. Zia** (South Africa) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.17 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Agenda item 55: Globalization and interdependence (*continued*)

(a) Globalization and interdependence (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.15)

Draft resolution on the role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence

7. **Mr. Le Roux** (South Africa) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.15 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. It was very important to target one particular aspect of globalization at a time. The focus at the current session was innovation, science and technology; the focus next year would be policy space in the context of globalization and interdependence.

(d) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (*continued*) (A/C.2/61/L.20)

Draft resolution on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption

8. **Mr. Le Roux** (South Africa) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/61/L.20 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Because the Convention had only recently entered into force and the first session of the Conference of the Parties had not yet taken place, the draft resolution was procedural in nature. However, it was not intended to be a precedent for future resolutions. Paragraph 5 requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session a report on the outcome of the first session of the Conference of the Parties, thereby ensuring that next year's resolution would be substantive in nature.

Agenda item 58: Operational activities for development: operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/61/77-E/2006/59 and A/61/292)

9. **Mr. Seth** (Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on comprehensive statistical data on operational activities for development for 2004 (A/61/77-E/2006/59). The Economic and Social Council's consideration of the report and its resolution 2006/14 would add value to the Committee's deliberations. That sequential consideration was an example of how the Council/Assembly architecture could be further strengthened.

10. The Secretariat preparations currently under way for the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review to be undertaken by the General Assembly at its sixty-second session would be greatly enhanced by the analysis and information brought together in preparation for the much-anticipated report of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment. The report before the Committee would also provide a strong analytical basis for examining long-term funding trends and their implications. As requested in Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/7, the data in the report had been refined to better reflect funding for operational activities for development.

11. The report painted a mixed and complex picture of development cooperation activities and operational activities for development. Overall, funding for funds and programmes had risen in recent years, following a downward trend in the 1990s. The total value of contributions to the United Nations system for development cooperation activities in 2004 ($12.3 billion) represented a 17 per cent increase in nominal terms and a 7.6 per cent increase in real terms compared to 2003.

12. However, the picture was complicated by different movements in core and non-core funding. For

the first time in five years, contributions to core resources had fallen both in dollar terms and as a share of total contributions (only 41 per cent in 2004), though preliminary figures for 2005 indicated an overall increase in absolute terms. While non-core resources were important supplementary resources, the General Assembly had repeatedly highlighted the need to enhance regular or core contributions. Imbalance led to compromises. In his report on mandating and delivering: analysis and recommendations to facilitate the review of mandates (A/60/733), the Secretary-General had asked Member States to give serious consideration to the fact that duplication and overlaps could occur because of the nature of funding and the increasing role of non-core funding. Entities, over-dependent on non-core resources, had to orient their work on the promise of funding and the compromises that might entail.

13. The amount of total annual expenditure received by the least developed countries from 2000 to 2004 (around 40 per cent) was considerably higher than in previous years, reflecting growing international concern about the plight of the poorest countries. Among United Nations organizations, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had allocated the highest proportion of their expenditures to those countries in 2004.

14. A number of observations in the section on humanitarian assistance — namely, the very blurred distinction between humanitarian assistance and long-term development; the widely differing reporting practices among agencies; and the volatility of humanitarian contributions, the underfunding of humanitarian assistance and the fact that sectoral interventions sometimes called for action even before the worst aspects of crisis took hold — had important policy relevance.

15. On the issue of reporting, his Office was committed to working with the concerned United Nations agencies and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to establish a common standardized humanitarian assistance reporting system, thereby giving effect to the relevant Economic and Social Council resolution.

16. While much scope remained for improving the accuracy and coverage of statistical information on the operational activities of the United Nations system, things were moving in the right direction. The report itself was a greater effort to harmonize data collection and analysis methods within the United Nations system, including with the conventions of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

17. **Ms. Heyzer** (Executive Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)), introducing the report on UNIFEM activities for 2005 transmitted by the Secretary-General (A/61/292), said that UNIFEM worked in four priority areas: reducing feminization of poverty and exclusion; promoting gender equality in democratic governance and post-conflict development; ending violence against women; and halting the spread of HIV/AIDS. It focused on encouraging United Nations partners, Governments, civil society and the private sector to form strong partnerships to advance gender equality and women's empowerment and achieve national development goals. UNIFEM programmes took a holistic approach, linking normative frameworks with institutional reform to bring concrete change on the ground. That included formulating and implementing laws and policies to promote gender equality and women's human rights; building institutional capacity to allocate sufficient resources and establish accountability mechanisms to ensure implementation; strengthening gender equality advocates to monitor progress and mobilize constituencies; and ending harmful practices and attitudes.

18. Those strategies operated at multiple levels and across sectors. Following its 2001 campaign to have gender-responsive budgeting in 45 countries by 2015, UNIFEM had supported programmes in 30 countries, where it worked across sectors, building relationships with ministries that affected women, such as health and education, and then scaling up results through partnerships with finance and planning ministries. In Morocco, for example, concrete budget measures were now spelled out in the gender budget statement that accompanied the national budget, while in India the economic survey that accompanied the presentation of the annual budget now included a gender budget analysis. In both cases, UNIFEM support had facilitated the development of a gender-responsive budgeting knowledge network, through which Governments and United Nations partners obtained up-to-date knowledge and technical support.

19. Concrete results could also be seen in its two-year programme with the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) to showcase holistic strategies for mainstreaming a gender perspective in Millennium Development Goal processes, including through poverty dialogues, multi-stakeholder meetings and the development of gender-responsive indicators. Three pilot countries had "engendered" their Millennium Development Goal reports, one had started Millennium Development Goal planning at the district level, and all five had increased their use of analysis and data in reporting and monitoring. Working through the gender theme groups in United Nations country teams, the programme had influenced national planning frameworks in two countries, the poverty reduction strategy paper process in another, and the national strategic development plan in yet another.

20. The issue was not lack of good practices or effective strategies, but rather how to implement strategies on a scale large enough to turn the tide for gender equality and women's human rights and achieve national development goals. The review of the implementation of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review provided an opportunity to develop concrete recommendations to increase strategy- and practice-sharing among agencies on the ground, monitoring and accountability mechanisms, and sustained partnerships and resources, particularly at the country level.

21. After working hard to secure frameworks and mechanisms, the United Nations must take up the far more difficult task of implementing strategies and practices and helping countries meet all international development goals. Three priorities needed to be addressed.

22. First, there was a need to strengthen a coherent and integrated approach across the United Nations system. As the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution on gender had recognized, development effectiveness required gender equality to be addressed coherently throughout the United Nations system. In response, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Task Team on Gender Equality, which was chaired by UNIFEM, coordinated action among its 16 member agencies to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment and ensure that they were incorporated into the tools and guidance given by UNDG to United Nations country teams. The Task Team had recommended bringing together good practices in each organization to raise the bar on gender equality accountability across the system. It also proposed two actions to help United Nations country teams move from improved analysis to more coherent implementation and accountability: an "Accounting for Gender Equality" scorecard to assess their performance and identify gaps and progress across the whole system; and an "Action Learning" process to help Governments and civil society move forward on gender equality and women's empowerment.

23. Second, gender equality needed to be strengthened in national development strategies. Gender equality action plans were in place in over 120 countries, while laws and action plans to end violence against women had been adopted in 89 countries. What was needed was an implementation strategy. UNIFEM was helping Governments adopt harmonized gender equality indicators; strengthening capacity among stakeholders to incorporate harmonized indicators into national development planning and poverty reduction strategies; mobilizing, together with the European Union, a critical mass of change agents committed to a more gender-equitable society, including Government leaders and international and regional organizations. In so doing, it was working to ensure that women's voices and perspectives were brought into the development process; that gender equality principles and strategies were incorporated into all coordination mechanisms; and that national action plans on gender equality and violence against women were integrated into national development planning and strategies.

24. Third, there was a need to strengthen monitoring and accountability by women on the ground. For work on gender equality and social justice, accountability meant provision of sufficient resources for implementation and community-level participation in defining targets and tracking progress. That also helped grass-roots and women's organizations perform a watchdog function, thereby bringing underrepresented and excluded groups into the development process.

25. The gender equality architecture needed to be strengthened at the global and country levels and the United Nations system as a whole needed to respond to the new opportunities for, and current threats to, gender quality and women's human rights. A consolidated gender entity would make the much needed difference to the extent that it had sufficient presence and authority with United Nations country teams and could

inspire and mobilize partnerships and agents for change. It must be connected to a constituency at the country level, to ensure that the system was responsive to women's realities, and be able to tackle emerging issues and push the system to tackle them too.

26. **Mr. Abreha** (Ethiopia) noted the rise in the share of resources allocated to the least developed countries, which was in congruence with the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. He expressed particular appreciation to WFP and UNICEF for their efforts in that regard.

27. However, 40 per cent was much lower than what had been agreed in the respective funds and programmes. That figure apparently related to total core and non-core resources. He would be interested to know why the least developed countries received a lower percentage and how resources could increasingly be channelled from non-core resources to the least developed countries.

28. **Mr. Seth** (Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination) said that the figures provided in the report (table 9, p. 18) reflected the percentage of total expenditure — in other words, both core and non-core resources — received by the least developed countries. He wished to qualify his earlier comments by pointing out that the data under consideration covered the period up to 2004. Subsequent changes would be reflected in greater detail in the next report.

29. **Mr. Gass** (Switzerland) asked whether it would be feasible to bridge the current 18-month lag in data and provide data including the previous year.

30. **Mr. Seth** (Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination) said that his Office wanted to move in that direction. However, it was not enough for data to be available; they also had to be presented in an analytically useful format. In other words, there was no point preparing a table if data were available for only some of the components. Only comprehensive data that were part of a comparative framework could be used by the Committee to conduct an analysis and draw conclusions. That said, it was hoped that the next report would contain updated information in such a format.

31. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States) said that the special involvement and contribution of the United Nations Resident Coordinators for the 50 least developed countries had been underscored during the five-year review of the Brussels Programme. Successful implementation of the Programme during the remaining five years would require greater engagement of the Resident Coordinators at the country level.

32. There was a need to increase the funding of the operational and development cooperation activities of the United Nations system. Least developed countries were all the more concerned at the paucity of core resources because they were badly equipped to attract non-core supplementary development funding. Constraints resulting from stagnant core resources affected the least developed countries disproportionately and all United Nations development partners were therefore urged to steadily increase their resource allocations to those countries.

33. He had encouraged the establishment of national mechanisms and focal points to enhance the least developed countries' ownership of the Brussels Programme as well as their capacity to implement it at the country level. However, national implementation efforts needed to be coordinated with the relevant United Nations system organizations.

34. As noted in the Brussels Programme, one cross-cutting priority was the achievement of gender parity in all aspects of society, including social and economic development. In that regard, the High Representative commended the efforts of UNIFEM to empower women to make a greater contribution to development.

35. **The Chairperson** invited the Committee to engage in a general discussion on the item.

36. **Mr. Le Roux** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that operational activities for development were dependent on adequate, sustainable and predictable funding. As highlighted in the Secretary-General's report (A/61/77-E/2006/59), there was a need to further refine data in reports to better reflect funding for operational activities for development, including a better distinction between contributions made for humanitarian assistance and for long-term development cooperation and expenditures and actual contributions as received and channelled through United Nations

funds, programmes and specialized agencies and the United Nations Secretariat.

37. Operational activities for development needed to be assessed on the basis of their impact on recipient countries with respect to building capacity to achieve poverty and hunger eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Developing countries should receive the necessary support to develop their national capacities in order to achieve their national development plans as well as the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

38. The Group of 77 and China was looking forward to future Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review discussions on ways to further improve the coherence and effectiveness of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system and strengthen South-South cooperation. The discussions would also provide an opportunity to review steps taken by the United Nations development system to ensure country ownership of operational activities.

39. **Ms. Fernández** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Moldova, said that the comprehensive statistical data on operational activities for development for 2004 contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/61/77-E/2006/59) had been refined to better differentiate between long-term development and humanitarian funding. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) was encouraged to continue working to establish a common standardized humanitarian assistance reporting system that provided estimations on a regular basis. It was also important that DESA should work closely with all United Nations organizations to make its data more representative and transparent, as the data were needed to plan the work of the United Nations system at the country level.

40. The European Union was committed to working for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, while recognizing that they could be reached only if women and men were able to play an equal part in all areas of life. Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment needed to be analysed and addressed in all the operational activities of the United Nations and in that respect, the European Union commended the achievements of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and UNIFEM during the review period.

41. The European Union also remained committed to the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Given that gender equality had largely been absent from the agenda-setting process in the new aid modalities, the European Union gave its full support to UNIFEM's strategy on mainstreaming gender equality into aid effectiveness.

42. **Mr. Tarragô** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of MERCOSUR, said that the Secretary-General's report on comprehensive statistical data on operational activities (A/61/77-E/2006/59) showed some improvement in the volume and quality of the information conveyed to Member States. It was particularly important that a distinction had been made between contributions for humanitarian assistance and contributions for long-term development cooperation and that the report had been refined and standardized to harmonize with the conventions of the OECD Development Assistance Committee.

43. With respect to the data on contributions and expenditures, it had been noted with concern that the contributions to UNDP and WFP were insufficient. MERCOSUR was particularly concerned at the reduction of their core resources between 2000 and 2004. It was also disturbing that the actual increase in expenditures between 2000 and 2004 had exceeded both the actual increase in contributions to total multilateral ODA and the actual increase in contributions to the United Nations system only. Such an unbalanced financial structure could only lead to a shortage in funding.

44. The Secretary-General's report had been broadened to include data on humanitarian assistance by United Nations organizations. Given that humanitarian assistance accounted for 27 per cent of total expenditures in 2004 and that the largest share of expenditures had been made by just two agencies, namely UNDP and WFP, it was possible that other vulnerable areas in the developing countries were being neglected.

45. Finally, it should be noted that contributions and expenditures were part of the whole architecture of international finance for development. They therefore

needed to be examined from other angles such as adequacy in volume, stability, effectiveness and their catalytic role in fostering harmonization among development partners.

46. **Mr. Piminov** (Russian Federation) welcomed the report in document A/61/77-E/2006/59 on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development. His delegation was not opposed to a standardized reporting system on humanitarian assistance, which would improve the quality of documentation and analysis within the Secretariat. The report also confirmed that a broader donor base was required for United Nations programmes and funds. Additional funding should be provided on a voluntary, and above all an unconditional, basis. His Government had taken practical steps in that regard by doubling its voluntary contributions in 2006. UNIFEM appeared to be an important independent component of the United Nations system that was making a tangible contribution, including in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

47. Extending and improving operational activities for development should be a priority. The principles that governed those activities and their funding — universality, objectivity, neutrality, multilateralism and their voluntary nature — guaranteed that they would be effective. In terms of reform, his delegation wished to emphasize once again that General Assembly resolution 59/250 was the only legitimate basis for further reforms of operational activities. The Triennial Review to be conducted in 2007 should take a measured and pragmatic approach to ensure consistency and take into account the positions of all stakeholders. Existing agreements had to be the starting point for further action.

48. It should also be recalled that the Economic and Social Council had recently reaffirmed that the "division of labour" between the General Assembly, the Council and operational agencies was one of the best features of the system's three-tiered architecture. Reform should not, therefore, be an end in itself. It should be aimed at greater effectiveness in each specific country, and not merely at greater overall cost efficiency. Any proposed innovation must be accompanied by a detailed comparison between the additional costs entailed and potential savings. Reforms should also be predicated on flexibility so that operational activities responded to the specific circumstances of different countries.

49. **Ms. Blum** (Colombia) said that her delegation welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General's report had provided disaggregated statistical data on the financing of operational activities for development, thereby allowing a clear differentiation between contributions for long-term development cooperation and contributions for humanitarian assistance.

50. The implementation of operational activities required adequate financial resources, the transfer of technology and the creation of national capacity. By focusing on factors that promoted long-term development, developing countries could reduce their vulnerability to distortions, external imbalances, natural disasters and environmental deterioration. In that regard, Colombia was concerned that only 20 per cent of the contributions for operational activities for development had been allocated to long-term development components.

51. In 2004, the Government of Colombia had developed an international cooperation strategy for 2006-2010 based on the Millennium Development Goals and the objectives of its national development plan. Priorities included the fight against the global drug problem, environmental protection, reconciliation and governance, and achievement of the Goals. The strategy recognized the need for new approaches to enable middle-income countries such as Colombia to access international cooperation resources. Colombia hoped that the international community would renew its offers of cooperation to strengthen the rule of law, the promotion of human rights, regional development and humanitarian assistance.

52. **Mr. Benfreha** (Algeria) described the operational activities for development of the United Nations system as essential vectors for development at national and regional levels. The objective of United Nations reform should be to amplify such activities in order to help the developing countries in their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. To that end, the effectiveness of operational activities for development could be assessed only through the implementation and follow-up of the approved programmes, examining the results actually achieved.

53. There was a need too for greater refinement in the statistical data in order to make a clearer distinction between contributions for development and for humanitarian assistance. Algeria was interested in particular in how to make operational activities for

development more competitive, and counted on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review to give the desired results of better implementation.

54. The funding of operational activities for development needed to be neutral, voluntary and predictable. Financing remained an acute problem, even if there had been some recent increases in resources. The report of the Secretary-General (A/61/77-E/2006/59) valued the contributions received for development cooperation activities at $12.3 billion for 2004, representing an increase of 7.6 per cent in real terms. That increase should be consolidated by a rise in contributions paid to the United Nations system, as well as by suitable measures to bring about the desired leverage effect in terms of sustainable development.

55. Operational activities for development should provide consistent and well-coordinated support to the developing countries' national strategies. Strengthening their national capacities in line with their own priorities and needs should remain the primary objective of such activities.

56. Finally, better coordination of the operational activities of the United Nations agencies responsible for development issues would be needed to ensure optimum implementation of approved projects. The United Nations system, facing management problems because of overlapping responsibilities, needed more cohesion in order to achieve greater effectiveness on the ground.

57. Like other developing countries, Algeria participated in South-South cooperation by making voluntary contributions to the relevant bodies. Such cooperation, which was considered as the indicator of the effectiveness of development, was assuming importance within the United Nations system.

58. **Mr. Llanio Gonzalez** (Cuba) said that, over five years after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, the so-called Agenda for Development was still far from being effectively implemented, owing to the enormous obstacles and challenges posed by the neoliberal globalization process. Numerous sources provided evidence of the critical economic and social situation currently facing the world, characterized by the spread and increase of hunger and poverty, the intensification of armed conflicts, environmental degradation and the propagation of diseases such as AIDS, threatening the very existence of several countries.

59. It was reported, for example, that the poorest 40 per cent of the world population lived on less than 2 dollars a day and that every year 11 million children died from preventable diseases. In addition, there were 852 million people suffering from hunger and 876 million illiterate adults.

60. The activities of the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies in each country thus had a special significance. Their field work made them uniquely aware of and uniquely qualified to deal with the real needs of developing countries and it was thus crucially important to preserve their valuable contribution. Cuba favoured retaining the separate identity of each of them, with their specific mandates and functions, rejecting the idea of a possible "merger", but was also in favour of greater coordination and coherence among them in order to maximize the effectiveness of their work. Such coordination, however, did not necessarily imply common management frameworks or field-level programming, or any loss of individual identities.

61. Since there were no "one-size-fits-all" development patterns, operational activities should respond to the national strategies and development priorities of each country. In that regard, Cuba remained concerned about the growing priority being given within UNDP to implementation of activities not directly linked to economic and social development. Cuba also noted with concern the trend over recent years towards an increase in non-core resources for emergencies and thematic funds of interest to the donors, as compared to an increasingly insufficient volume of core resources. That imbalance could turn funds and programmes into relief agencies. There was no doubt about the importance of agencies' support for humanitarian assistance, to be provided with the consent of the affected country and at its request. However, the true role of the agencies, funds and programmes was to foster long-term development. Donor countries must provide the indispensable core resources for the operational activities, on an ongoing and predictable basis. Non-core resources could not by any means be a substitute for core resources.

62. Among the main areas in need of resources and assistance was South-South cooperation, conceived as a complement to the North-South cooperation and not

as a substitute for it. The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes should implement initiatives to strengthen such cooperation, incorporating that objective into their operational activities, always with respect for established principles and procedures, and without any negative impact on the scarce resources currently devoted to operational activities. In particular, the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation should play a more active role in promoting greater integration of South-South cooperation within the other bodies of the United Nations system.

63. The principles of national security, territorial integrity and national unity of States, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, should continue to guide operational activities anywhere in the world.

64. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that development was increasingly seen as multidimensional, encompassing economic, social and environmental aspects. The United Nations must address those aspects in a comprehensive manner. The functions and activities of the individual United Nations bodies were varied, but they had a common purpose, and together they could make the system more cohesive. Coordination among all entities was essential for maximizing each one's distinct comparative advantage, and for enabling the United Nations system as a whole to respond effectively to current demands. Complex rules and procedures must be streamlined; programmatic coherence could reduce duplication and transaction costs, releasing more resources for operational activities. Efforts to harmonize activities should be driven by criteria and procedures set by the whole United Nations membership.

65. Proper intergovernmental monitoring and evaluation of United Nations activities would enhance their effectiveness. Agencies must be held accountable for their performance, which would enhance programme results. Greater efficiency of country teams could best be achieved if their operational activities and contribution to national priorities were evaluated by the host Governments. Effective performance of the resident coordinator system required greater financial, organizational and technical support. In order for United Nations activities at the country level to be coherent with national development strategies, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) must reflect national priorities.

66. The objective of system-wide coherence should not be driven merely by the principle of assimilation and cost-cutting. Rather, it should be guided by reality and pragmatism. The United Nations should avoid shifting resources from development to other activities which were donor-driven and not in line with the priorities of developing countries. The system-wide coherence process should enhance intergovernmental oversight and coordination, including through strengthening of the role of the Economic and Social Council.

67. The credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations development system depended on a stable and predictable resource base. There must be a better balance between core and non-core contributions, as well as closer scrutiny of spending. The current insufficiency of core resources for both administration and programme development represented the single greatest constraint on the performance of development entities. Lack of resources had changed the dynamics of the demand-driven approach of the United Nations, impeding the adoption of long-term strategic decisions, something that was contrary to the spirit of the Millennium Declaration. However, Bangladesh did wish to thank those donors who had fulfilled their pledges.

68. The new funding options and modalities in the report (A/61/77-E/2006/59) warranted careful consideration. The idea of assessed contributions by the donors to United Nations country teams merited serious consideration. There was still room for trimming the overhead costs of the United Nations without significantly changing the basic structure.

69. Multilateral assistance should not be tied to any political conditionality and each country must enjoy the necessary space for its own policy formulation. Bangladesh looked forward to the work of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, and to the Panel's development, in line with its mandate, of a comprehensive set of recommendations to guide the United Nations to a new era in which the Organization could effectively leverage its unique legitimacy and role in realizing the Millennium Development Goals.

70. **Mr. Sinha** (India) said that the report on comprehensive statistical data on operational activities for development for 2004 (A/61/77-E/2006/59) provided a good picture of the distinction between

contributions made for humanitarian assistance and those for long-term development cooperation.

71. The report revealed that, while yearly contributions for development cooperation had risen steadily over the past five years, the pattern for core resources had not been so favourable. It referred to UNICEF's 2004 contributions report, which stated that, while it highly valued other resource contributions, UNICEF's comparative advantage would be compromised if the imbalance between regular resources and other resources continued. While core and other contributions had been more or less in balance between 2000 and 2003, the share of core resources had fallen substantially in 2004, amounting to no more than 70 per cent of other resources. Even the nominal dollar amount of core resources had fallen for the first time. Core resources were the foundation of country cooperation programmes and were necessary for UNICEF and similar organizations to perform core functions at the optimal level and to contribute to achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. While recognizing the value of the increase in non-core resources, the General Assembly had repeatedly highlighted the need to enhance the core contributions to the United Nations development system. Its resolution 59/250 acknowledged in paragraph 20 that other resources were "not a substitute for core resources".

72. India would stress the need for adequate core funding during the 2007 discussion of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review. It believed that the United Nations system's operational activities for development should be assessed on the basis of the contribution they made to developing countries' efforts to pursue their national development plans and priorities. Since the strength of the United Nations system lay in its legitimacy as a neutral, objective and trusted partner for both recipient and donor countries, those characteristics should be strengthened so that the Organization's operational activities for development could better support developing countries' long-term development efforts.

73. The report presented and analysed data on humanitarian contributions and expenditures for the first time. India agreed that countries in need required both humanitarian and development assistance, and that in many cases humanitarian assistance was an essential component in the process of transition from relief to development. The international community needed to maintain its interest and funding for the reconstruction phase of humanitarian emergencies, long after the media had moved on to new stories. General Assembly resolution 59/250 had recommended that planning for the transition to development should be started right at the beginning of the relief phase.

74. The report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (A/61/292) provided an overview of its programmes and activities. Despite being a small agency, UNIFEM had been able to make a contribution in several areas in a large number of countries. However, the outcomes of UNIFEM's work were dependent on the contributions of the national partners in Government and non-governmental organizations.

75. The report cited a number of projects in India in which UNIFEM was involved. An important one was the partnership between UNIFEM and the Indian Railways to incorporate gender-responsive policies and practices related to HIV/AIDS. The report described that project as a "recognized model of public-sector intervention" and added that, in partnership with UNIFEM and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), representatives of the Chinese Railways had visited the programme to look into possible replication.

76. India congratulated UNIFEM on attaining a record total income of $57.6 million in 2005 and for exceeding its multi-year funding framework target of $43.4 million. However, the core contributions of $22 million fell below the target of $25.4 million. India emphasized the importance of enhanced core funding to help UNIFEM continue its mandated activities.

77. **Mr. Petranto** (Indonesia) said that, with the launch of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence early in 2006, the efforts of the United Nations system to implement General Assembly resolution 59/250 were taking place in a favourable policy context, with improvements being pursued in all areas of operational activities. In response to the evolving work environment, and in accordance with the provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, including the follow-up resolution 60/265, the United Nations system had adopted various initiatives to ensure that operational activities were aligned with national development frameworks. The concept "*one team, one leader and one programme*" was influencing policies and practical decisions at the country level. In addition, national capacity-building was being

undertaken to facilitate the long-term sustainability of programmes. Those measures would create momentum in recipient countries to achieve their development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

78. Excessively earmarked funding would become unnecessary if national development priorities determined areas of cooperation between recipient and donor countries. There would also be accelerated progress in that area if the agencies in the United Nations system were to harmonize and simplify the relevant rules and procedures of their operational activities. That would promote shared handling of resources, coherent decision-making and streamlined management of activities. There should be thorough joint evaluations of operational activities.

79. However, the availability of adequate resources on a continuous and predictable basis was critical for success. A cause for concern therefore was the stunted growth of the core resources that underpinned operational activities, in comparison with supplementary funding.

80. The value of South-South cooperation, as a means of generating development resources and building capacity within developing countries, should not be overlooked but such cooperation must be mainstreamed into the operational activities of the United Nations system as part of the process of triangular cooperation involving donors. Further, natural and man-made disasters had serious implications for operational activities, causing funds to be re-routed to rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. Once disasters occurred, therefore, they had to be factored into the development process as part of its costs. Consequently, the inclusion of data on humanitarian assistance contributions and expenditures in the Secretary General's report (A/61/77-E/2006/59) was a welcome development. In the future, the data should be more detailed and should serve as the basis of a common standardized humanitarian assistance reporting system, with the distinction between humanitarian and regular activities always being maintained.

81. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (China) said that, without adequate, steadily increasing and predictable core resources, United Nations operational activities could not effectively help the recipient countries implement their national development strategies. Since the adoption of the Monterrey Consensus, the international community had made extensive efforts to meet those commitments and the total resources of the United Nations development system had in fact seen some increases in recent years. However, the increases had been mainly in non-core resources. The increasing dependency of certain programmes and funds on non-core resources posed a challenge to the United Nations development system's basic principles of universality, neutrality and multilateralism. Developed countries should increase their contributions to core resources, and achieve the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of their GNP as official development assistance, with 0.15 to 0.20 per cent going to the least developed countries. China supported the establishment of timetables and review mechanisms for the implementation of those goals.

82. To the extent of its ability, China made yearly contributions to the core resources of development programmes, funds and agencies. It was China's hope that the United Nations development system would adopt comprehensive and integrated measures to intensify fund-raising efforts without imposing extra burdens on the developing countries.

83. Regular comprehensive reviews of operational activities for development were essential. Since 2005, in its effort to implement the follow-up to the World Summit and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the United Nations development system had carried out laudable reforms with a view to reducing administrative costs and enhancing efficiency. In preparation for the 2007 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, China was in favour of an early comprehensive assessment of the contribution of the United Nations operational activities to recipient countries' efforts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable social and economic development. Such an assessment would enable the United Nations development system to sum up experiences and lessons, identify underperforming areas and provide better guidance to its future work.

84. Reforming the United Nations operational activities for development and improving their quality and efficiency should result in increased capacity to meet the various needs of the recipient countries in an integrated and flexible way. Therefore, it should not be rigidly confined to certain specific areas. Operational activities in the field should take full account of the recipient countries' conditions and needs and ensure the participation and consent of their Governments,

rather than attempting to use the same model in all cases. In trying to strengthen the Resident Coordinator system, a balance between authority and responsibility should be achieved, reinforcing accountability while granting greater power. Only in that way could the recipient countries benefit to the maximum from programme cooperation. China was looking forward to constructive discussions with other Member States on concrete reform plans once the Secretary General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence had submitted its report.

85. Ultimately, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals depended on the capacities of the developing countries themselves. Capacity-building in those countries was therefore the core of development and a long process that should be incorporated into the mainstream operations of the United Nations development system. The United Nations development system should actively explore new ideas for promoting South-South cooperation, intensifying efforts to consolidate current resources and opening up more financing channels. China hoped that the developed countries would assist by contributing to funds dedicated to economic and technological cooperation among developing countries such as the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation and the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

86. Over the years China had carried out fruitful economic and technological cooperation with other developing countries on an extensive scale, and had provided them with a certain amount of economic and technological assistance, within its own capabilities. All that had been done on the basis of full respect for the need and ownership of the countries concerned. At the 2005 World Summit, President Hu Jintao had announced a series of new measures to help other developing countries accelerate their development, covering debt relief, preferential treatment in trade, human resources training, and cooperation in the field of public health.

87. **Mr. Gass** (Switzerland) said that the statistical compendium contained in the report on operational activities (A/61/77-E/2006/69) was especially useful in outlining the financing of international development activities. UNDG funds and programmes were doing promising work on harmonized evaluation systems, unified accounting standards and joint programming, but were hampered by administrative delays and uneven implementation. That signalled a serious human resource problem that should be given greater attention by fund and programme directors.

88. Specialized agencies were also showing positive signs of cooperation for development. They had moved quickly to implement General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, despite the financing challenges they faced. Nevertheless, there was still much work to be done and he encouraged stakeholders to intensify their efforts.

89. His delegation was especially heartened that Member States were applying the principle of the division of labour between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Council had fulfilled expectations in implementing resolution 59/250, using for that purpose a matrix designed jointly by UNDG and DESA that would allow stakeholders to track the implementation process, and had defined a satisfactory set of tasks for the subsequent triennial review.

90. Switzerland looked forward to reading the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence and hoped that Member States would study and discuss it, since it might offer new ideas for improving the efficiency and impact of United Nations operations.

91. **Mr. Wagle** (Nepal) said that the effectiveness of operational activities lay in their responsiveness to the development needs of recipient countries. Improved data and statistical practices would lead to better coordination of development efforts and greater accountability and would be useful in preparing for the upcoming Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

92. Every country was responsible for its own development, but international support from development partners was also essential: institutional capacities, infrastructure, technology and financial resources were all needed to manage development. In order to mobilize development resources effectively, capacity-building was required for national, community and private-sector stakeholders. In that respect, the least developed countries deserved special attention from the international community and increased financial and technical support in health, education, agriculture and rural infrastructure.

93. His delegation appreciated the follow-up given by United Nations agencies to development summit

outcomes and the support they had provided through development programmes and humanitarian operations. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in particular should play a greater role in the follow-up to population development activities. UNIFEM, for its part, had done important work on gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women.

94. Trade was crucial to economic growth and sustainable development, and the international community had realized that it was necessary to integrate the least developed countries into the multilateral trading system. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) played a crucial role in that process through technical cooperation and capacity-building. The Aid for Trade Initiative should be made operational and the Common Fund for Commodities strengthened.

95. The core resources of the United Nations agencies for operational activities should be increased in a sustained and predictable manner. The global partnership for development could be strengthened through effective assistance to the developing and least developed countries aimed at implementing their national development strategies. Collaborative efforts to evaluate operational activities and thus respond to evolving development needs would ensure better results.

96. **Mr. Tyrkus** (Ukraine), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, namely Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova (GUAM), said that the millennium review summit had made progress across a broad sustainable development agenda. Improved management and coordination of operational activities was essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, which made the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of those activities all the more important.

97. Inter-agency and field-level coordination appeared to be progressing well. Valuable work had been done to improve the system of Resident Coordinators and align country operations with the Millennium Declaration. It was also encouraging that UNDG had stepped up its efforts to streamline programming procedures. Nevertheless, simpler procedures should be sought in order to improve services to recipient countries and enhance their capacity to manage development projects.

98. Strategic planning instruments such as the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) had been successful in providing an integrated approach to national priorities and linking them with the programme activities of United Nations agencies. However, greater attention should have been focused on the economic content of those mechanisms. To achieve that, greater strategic collaboration should be developed between United Nations agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions and the regional commissions. The activities of those institutions could also be strengthened through coordination of policy and programming.

99. Funding for operational development activities should be increased substantially on a predictable, continuous and assured basis. A better balance was also needed, with funding consisting primarily of core resources. Contributions to the core resources of operational agencies should remain voluntary. In addition, multi-year funding frameworks should be used to link resource mobilization and performance by strengthening the results-based management of those agencies.

100. The GUAM States supported the activities of UNIFEM in gendering national policies and legislation and, more generally, reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the operational activities of the organizations in the United Nations system.

101. **Mr. Chidumo** (Mozambique) said that the report in document A/61/77-E/2006/59 was a fundamental instrument for planning the response of the United Nations to the needs of developing countries. His delegation concurred that data and statistical practices should be standardized in order to improve the quality of data on operational activities. The data analysis contained in the report was crucial to ensuring a more coherent approach to development and humanitarian assistance.

102. The credibility and effectiveness of the operational activities of the United Nations system depended on the universal, voluntary nature of contributions and on their predictability and adequacy in responding to the development needs of individual countries. Unfortunately, the current volume and quality of aid fell short of the expectations of recipient countries. Inadequate financing, complex managerial structures and lack of coherence in policy and

operational activities kept the United Nations system from playing a larger role in helping nations achieve internationally agreed development goals. Fundamental changes were therefore needed to capitalize on the pledge made in the 2005 World Summit Outcome to make the United Nations system more effective and accountable.

103. His delegation believed in the vital importance of the United Nations as the centre of a multilateral system. As a major recipient of assistance in sub-Saharan Africa, Mozambique benefited from strong cooperation within the context of UNDAF in support of the development priorities set by his Government. Much more could be done, however, if organizational and funding obstacles were removed. A more coherent and integrated approach, together with the inclusion of regional commissions in the reform process, would ensure that United Nations operational activities matched the development needs of recipient countries and played a stronger role in development. In addition, a further level of coordination was required between the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions to maximize the effectiveness of financial and technical assistance coming from inside and outside the United Nations system.

104. His delegation pledged its support for the reform process aimed at creating a United Nations system that could deliver more to the international development agenda and thus respond to the growing needs of people worldwide.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.